

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method of making a fabric having a finished edge comprising:

cutting a fabric to provide a cut edge having a plurality of fibers, at least some of said fibers having free ends terminating at an edge of said fabric;

after cutting the fabric, disposing a bead of a curable polymer over at least a portion of the cut edge of said fabric so that said curable polymer engages the free ends of said fibers at the edge of said fabric;

after the disposing step, curing said polymer for finishing the edge of said fabric, wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said fabric.

2. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said curable polymer is in contact with the free ends of said fibers.

3. (canceled)

4. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cut fabric is a cut pattern piece for a garment, the method further comprising sewing said cut pattern piece to another cut pattern piece for making a garment.

5. (currently amended) A method of making a fabric having a finished edge comprising:

providing a fabric having a plurality of fibers, at least some of said fibers having free ends terminating at an edge of said fabric;

disposing a curable polymer over the edge of said fabric so that said curable polymer engages the free ends of said fibers at the edge of said fabric;

after the disposing step, curing said polymer for finishing the edge of said fabric, wherein said polymer comprises silicone, and wherein the finished edge is an

unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said fabric.

6. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said polymer comprises a silicone compound having by weight approximately 10-30% silica and 61-90% vinylpolydimethylsiloxane.

7. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising prior to the disposing a curable polymer step, placing the edge of said fabric over an absorbent material.

8. (original) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the edge of said fabric is in contact with said absorbent material during the disposing a curable polymer step.

9. (original) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said absorbent material includes an elongated sheet.

10. (original) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said absorbent material includes paper.

11. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising aligning the edge of said fabric with a dispenser for said curable polymer and dispensing said curable polymer onto the edge of said fabric.

12. (original) The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said dispenser includes at least one opening for dispensing said curable polymer.

13. (original) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said dispenser includes a series of openings for dispensing said curable polymer, at least one of said openings having a different size than at least another one of said openings.

14. (original) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the curing said polymer step includes heating said polymer.

15. (original) The method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising monitoring the temperature of said fabric during the curing step.

16. (original) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said polymer is heated to approximately 260-280 degrees Fahrenheit.

17. (original) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the heating said polymer step includes providing one or more heating stations having heating elements, activating said heating elements to produce heat and placing said fabric into thermal communication with said one or more heating stations.

18. (original) The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising providing a conveyor element for placing said fabric in communication with said one or more heating stations.

19. (original) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein said conveyor element has a top surface for supporting said fabric, said top surface having a low coefficient of friction.

20. (original) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the top surface of said conveyor element has a non-stick coating.

21. (currently amended) A method of making a fabric having a finished edge comprising:

providing a fabric having a plurality of fibers, at least some of said fibers having free ends terminating at an edge of said fabric;

disposing a curable polymer over the edge of said fabric so that said curable polymer engages the free ends of said fibers at the edge of said fabric;

after the disposing step, curing said polymer for finishing the edge of said fabric, wherein the disposing a curable polymer step comprises disposing a first polymer bead at the edge of said fabric and disposing at least one second polymer bead spaced from said first polymer bead, wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said fabric.

22. (original) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said at least one second polymer bead is narrower than said first polymer bead.

23. (original) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said at least one second polymer bead is adjacent said first polymer bead.

24. (original) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the at least one second polymer bead includes a plurality of second polymer beads spaced from one another so that said fabric is exposed between said plurality of second polymer beads.

25. (original) The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said plurality of second polymer beads extends in a direction parallel to the edge of said fabric.

26. (original) The method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said plurality of second polymer beads extends along a path that mirrors the edge of said fabric.

27. (original) The method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said at least one second polymer bead follows a path selected from the group consisting of paths that are curved, S-shaped, dotted and non-continuous.

28. (currently amended) A method of making cut pattern pieces having finished edges comprising:

laying out a spread of fabric;

cutting said spread of fabric to provide a plurality of cut pattern pieces, each said cut pattern piece including a plurality of fibers having free ends terminating at an edge of said cut pattern piece;

after the cutting step, disposing a curable polymer over the edges of said cut pattern pieces so that said curable polymer engages the free ends of the fibers at the edges of said cut pattern pieces;

after the disposing step, curing said polymer for finishing the edges of said cut pattern pieces, wherein the

finished edges are unopposed edges that are stretchable for adjusting to movement of said cut pattern pieces.

29. (original) The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein said polymer comprises silicone.

30. (original) The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the disposing a curable polymer step comprises disposing a first polymer bead over the edges of said cut pattern pieces and disposing at least one second polymer bead over each said cut pattern piece adjacent the first polymer beads.

31. (original) The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein said second polymer beads are narrower than said first polymer beads.

32. (original) The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein said at least one second polymer bead includes a plurality of second polymer beads spaced from one another on said cut pattern piece with said fabric being exposed between said plurality of second polymer beads.

33. (currently amended) A garment comprising:

a cut pattern piece having a cut edge, said cut pattern piece including a fabric having a plurality of fibers with free ends that terminate at the cut edge of said cut pattern piece; and

a bead of cured polymer material provided proximate to the cut edge of said cut pattern piece, wherein said bead of cured polymer material contacts at least some of the free ends of said fibers at the cut edge of said fabric for finishing the edge, wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said fabric.

34. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 33, further comprising:

a plurality of second beads of cured polymer material provided on said cut pattern piece adjacent the first bead of cured polymer material, wherein the plurality of second beads

are spaced from one another on said cut pattern piece with the fabric of said cut pattern piece being exposed between the second beads.

35. (currently amended) A garment comprising:

a cut pattern piece including a fabric having edges and an interior region of said fabric being spaced from the edges;

at least one bead of silicone deposited in the interior region of said fabric, wherein said silicone is in contact with said fabric and provides gripping for holding said cut pattern piece in place on a wearer's body; and

a bead of cured polymer material provided over free ends of fibers at at least one of the edges of said fabric for finishing the at least one of the edges of said fabric, wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said fabric.

36. (previously presented) The garment as claimed in claim 35, wherein said garment is selected from the group of garments including undergarments, activewear, shapewear, bathing suits, garments having support panels and garments using compression fabric.

37. (previously presented) The garment as claimed in claim 35, wherein said fabric includes fibers selected from the group consisting of natural fibers including cotton fibers and synthetic fibers including nylon, polyester and spandex fibers.

38. (canceled)

39. (currently amended) A method of increasing material yield when cutting pattern pieces from fabric comprising:

laying a spread of fabric having an unfinished edge;

cutting a plurality of pattern pieces from said spread of fabric, wherein at least some of said cut pattern pieces are spaced from the unfinished edge of said spread;

disposing a curable polymer material over one or more edges of said cut pattern pieces including the at least some of said cut pattern pieces spaced from the unfinished edge of said spread, wherein said cut pattern pieces include fibers having free ends that terminate at the one or more edges of said cut pattern pieces;

curing said polymer material for finishing the one or more edges of said cut pattern pieces, wherein the unfinished edge of said spread is devoid of a knitted-in edge and is an unopposed edge.

40. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 39, wherein said polymer comprises silicone.

41. (currently amended) A garment comprising:

a cut pattern piece including stretchable fabric made of fibers having free ends terminating at a cut edge of said cut pattern piece;

a bead of a polymer material provided on said stretchable fabric in proximate contact with the free ends of said fibers terminating at the cut edge of said cut pattern piece, wherein said polymer material provides a finished edge for said cut pattern piece, and wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said cut pattern piece.

42. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 41, wherein said garment is selected from the group of garments including undergarments, activewear, shapewear, bathing suits, garments having support panels and garments using compression fabric.

43. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 41, wherein the finished edge of said cut pattern piece is devoid of narrow elastic, a folded-over edge, trim and lace.

44. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 41 wherein said garment is an undergarment, and wherein the finished edge

of said cut pattern piece is devoid of narrow elastic, a folded-over edge, trim and lace so as to provide a smoother finished edge that is not visible through an outergarment covering the undergarment.

45. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 41, wherein said polymer material provided on said stretchable fabric includes a first polymer bead provided in contact with the free ends of said fibers and at least one second polymer bead in contact with said fabric being spaced from said first polymer bead, wherein said at least one second polymer bead provides gripping for holding said fabric in place over a wearer's body.

46. (currently amended) A garment having a sleek finished edge comprising:

a cut pattern piece made of fibers, at least some of said fibers having free ends that terminate at a cut edge of said cut pattern piece;

a cured polymer material provided in contact with the free ends of said fibers at the cut edge of said cut pattern piece, wherein said cured polymer material provides a sleek finished edge to said cut pattern piece that is devoid of narrow elastic, trim, lace and a folded-over edge, wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said cut pattern piece.

47. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 46, wherein said cured polymer comprises silicone.

48. (original) The garment as claimed in claim 46, wherein said fabric is stretchable fabric.

49. (currently amended) A method of controlling a stretchable garment utilizing the stretch characteristics of stretchable fabric comprising:

providing a spread of stretchable fabric that is more stretchable in a first axial direction and less stretchable in a second axial direction;

cutting a pattern piece from said spread, wherein said at least one cut pattern piece has unfinished edges with free ends of fibers at the unfinished edges;

disposing a curable polymer over one of the unfinished edges of said cut pattern piece so that said curable polymer engages the free ends of said fibers, wherein the one of the unfinished edges having said curable polymer disposed thereon extends along a third axial direction that crosses the first axial direction; and

after the disposing step, curing said polymer for finishing the edge of said cut pattern piece, wherein the finished edge is an unopposed edge.

50. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 49, wherein said curable polymer comprises silicone.

51. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 50, wherein the disposing a curable polymer step comprises disposing a first polymer bead at the one of the unfinished edges and disposing at least one second polymer bead spaced from said first polymer bead.

52. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 51, wherein said at least one second polymer bead is narrower than said first polymer bead.

53. (currently amended) A method of making a fabric having a finished edge comprising:

providing a fabric having a plurality of fibers, at least some of said fibers having free ends terminating at an unfinished edge of said fabric;

disposing a curable polymer over the edge of said fabric so that said curable polymer engages said fibers proximate to said unfinished edge of said fabric;

after the disposing step, curing said polymer for finishing said unfinished edge of said fabric, wherein said polymer comprises silicone, and wherein said finished edge is an unopposed edge that is stretchable for adjusting to movement of said fabric.

54. (previously presented) The garment as claimed in claim 46, wherein said garment is an undergarment.